

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 35

March 14, 1996, 5:22 p.m.
Page S-2054 Temp. Record

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS/Foreign Population Planning Aid & Abortion

SUBJECT: Balanced Budget Downpayment Act, II . . . H.R. 3019. McConnell/Dole amendment No. 3500 to the Hatfield modified substitute amendment No. 3466.

ACTION: AMENDMENT REJECTED, 43-52

SYNOPSIS: As introduced, H.R. 3019, the Balanced Budget Downpayment Act, II, will make rescissions and will provide appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for the five regular appropriations bills that have not yet been signed into law (three of those bills have been vetoed, one has been stalled by a Senate Democratic filibuster on its conference report, and one has been stalled by a Senate Democratic filibuster against even beginning its consideration).

The Hatfield modified substitute amendment contains the text of S. 1594, as reported, which is the Senate's version of the bill. The amendment would increase spending by \$1.2 billion over the House-passed amount, and would create a \$4.8 billion contingency fund to accommodate part of the additional \$8 billion in spending requested by President Clinton (funds would not be released unless offsets were identified and enacted; President Clinton did not ask for or identify any means of paying for his increased spending proposals). As amended, the contingency fund was reduced due to increased education spending with offsets (see vote No. 27).

The McConnell/Dole amendment would strike section 3001. Section 3001 would allow the President to make available foreign assistance funds for population planning assistance regardless of the restrictions in public law 104-107 if he determined and reported to Congress that the effect of those restrictions would be to decrease the availability of population planning services and significantly increase the number of abortions.

(The restrictions in public law 104-107 suspend foreign assistance funding for population planning activities until July 1, 1996, and limit further funding for the next 15 months at 65 percent of the fiscal year 1995 appropriated level, apportioned on a monthly basis. The restrictions were enacted as a compromise to end an impasse between the House and the Senate on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996. The Senate favored funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and for family planning assistance to organizations that also performed abortions. The House opposed funding for the UNFPA because it operates in China, which has forced abortion and coercive sterilization policies, and it opposed funding for organizations that used

(See other side)

YEAS (43)			NAYS (52)			NOT VOTING (5)	
Republicans (39 or 78%)		Democrats (4 or 9%)	Republicans (11 or 22%)	Democrats (41 or 91%)		Republicans (3)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Helms	Breaux	Campbell	Akaka	Inouye	Bennett ⁻²	Kennedy ^{-2AN}
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Ford	Chafee	Baucus	Kerrey	Dole ⁻²	Moynihan ⁻¹
Bond	Inhofe	Heflin	Cohen	Biden	Kerry	Stevens ⁻²	
Brown	Kempthorne	Johnston	Domenici	Bingaman	Kohl		
Burns	Kyl		Hatfield	Boxer	Lautenberg		
Coats	Lott		Jeffords	Bradley	Leahy		
Cochran	Lugar		Kassebaum	Bryan	Levin		
Coverdell	Mack		Roth	Bumpers	Lieberman		
Craig	McCain		Simpson	Byrd	Mikulski		
D'Amato	McConnell		Snowe	Conrad	Moseley-Braun		
DeWine	Murkowski		Specter	Daschle	Murray		
Faircloth	Nickles			Dodd	Nunn		
Frist	Pressler			Dorgan	Pell		
Gorton	Santorum			Exon	Pryor		
Gramm	Shelby			Feingold	Reid		
Grams	Smith			Feinstein	Robb		
Grassley	Thomas			Glenn	Rockefeller		
Gregg	Thompson			Graham	Sarbanes		
Hatch	Thurmond			Harkin	Simon		
	Warner			Hollings	Wellstone		
					Wyden		

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

abortion as a method of birth control. The restrictions were passed to move the issue from the appropriations process to the authorizing committees, with the expectation that those committees would fashion a permanent-law compromise. See vote No. 4 and 104th Congress, 1st session, vote Nos. 456, 561, and 575 for related debate.)

Those favoring the amendment contended:

The McConnell/Dole amendment would strike the section of the bill that would strike the current restrictions on funding for foreign assistance for population planning. Those restrictions were put in place as a stop-gap means of enacting the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. The problem was that a majority of House Members were insisting on the adoption of two provisions relating to abortion, and a majority of Senators were insisting on their removal. One provision was to block funding for population planning from going to foreign organizations that performed abortions, and the other provision was to block funds from going to the UNFPA for as long as it operated in China, which has coercive abortion and sterilization policies. After repeated attempts to compromise failed, the appropriators put restrictions on all population funding as a means of forcing the issue into the authorization process where it belongs. These types of policy matters should be fought out and decided by enacting permanent legislation instead of by rehashing them each year on appropriations bills. Most of us who oppose the Hatfield amendment agree with the House--we do not think the United States should be in any way associated with China's horrendous policies, and we do not think that any U.S. foreign aid should go to organizations that use abortion as a method of birth control.

However, Senators who have different views should still support this amendment. We are well aware that many of our colleagues, both pro-choice and pro-life, are convinced that supporters of this amendment, and House Members, are being shortsighted. We are well aware that they are convinced that denying funds for contraceptives anywhere will simply result in more pregnancies and more abortions. The important point, though, is that a majority of House Members do not agree, and they are not going to change their minds on this bill. If we insist on the bill language, we will be right back to square one. The President will never veto this bill, because it will never get to him--House conferees are not going to agree to unrestricted population assistance funding. Calm, careful deliberation, with adequate time for hearings and expert testimony, is going to be necessary to craft a workable compromise on both these abortion issues. Even on the very remote chance that the House allows the language to go through, it will be a very Pyrrhic victory, because we will have the same fight in a few months on the fiscal year 1997 appropriations bill, and every bill thereafter until an authorization-language compromise is reached. The McConnell/Dole amendment would strike the language in this bill that will reopen the abortion fights that stalled the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for months. We do not want to stall this bill, so we support this amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

We will start by noting that the author of the language in this bill is an unabashedly pro-life Senator, Senator Hatfield. This fact has not helped him politically because he represents Oregon, which is perhaps the most pro-choice State in the country, but he has honorably, and vocally, stuck by his principles. Senator Hatfield, among others, believes that the true pro-life vote on the McConnell/Dole amendment is a "no" vote.

The next fact that must be noted is that our memory of events on the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill is a good deal different than is the memory of our colleagues. We do not remember reaching a "compromise" solution--we remember the Foreign Operations bill being tied to a large omnibus bill, and we remember being told by House Members that we could either take the "compromise" language they had drafted without our participation or we could shut the Government down again. Under those circumstances, we allowed the language to pass. The Senate was deprived of its chance to have an influence on this language. This bill will undo that injustice.

On the merits, we think that funding must be started again for foreign population assistance. The "compromise" provision that was adopted due to concern over two small parts of that aid was to cut all family planning assistance for fiscal year 1996 by 85 percent. This solution is extremely short-sighted. Both pro-life and pro-choice Members agree that the high number of abortions around the world is tragic and should be reduced. As we see it, the most effective means of preventing abortions is to prevent pregnancies in the first place. The most effective means the United States has for reducing the incidence of abortion world-wide, therefore, is to fund contraceptive programs. We by no means dispute that in many parts of the world abortion is a primary method of birth control, but we add that refusing to provide alternatives in countries will not do anything to stop that practice. As proof, we point to the former Soviet-bloc countries, where abortion rates are rapidly declining. While under the Soviet Union's control, women in those countries did not have access to contraceptives, and they had an average of 7 abortions over their lifetimes. Those rates are dropping now that contraceptives are more readily available.

According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, which is the research wing of Planned Parenthood, the funding restrictions in this bill will lead to 1.9 million more unplanned births and 1.6 million more abortions. Both pro-life and pro-choice Senators should find this result unacceptable. We urge our colleagues to look at the facts--the McConnell/Dole amendment would increase the number of abortions worldwide, and should thus be defeated.

MARCH 14, 1996

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